Civil War and Urban Form: The Taiping Rebellion in Yangzhou

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Part I. Introduction

This paper deals with the devastating effects of the Taiping War (1850-1864) on the city of Yangzhou and the patterns of urban reconstruction that followed, with special attention paid to the issue of urban morphology, or the city's physical structure. In it, I will first provide a brief, probably over-simplified, historical account of the city over the *longue duree* with reference to its changing form, size, and spatial orientation. In this section, I will demonstrate the ways in which shifts in the city's function literally reshaped the city over time, as fluctuations in the city's fortunes were mirrored by instability in its morphology prior to the mid- Ming. The relative instability of Yangzhou's urban form during this period offers a striking contrast to the hyper-stable Suzhou case described by Frederick Mote in his landmark 1973 article, "A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow."[1] It also suggests ways in which the shape of a Chinese city responded to a complex assortment of topographical and functional factors, as well as conventional ideals for urban planning. This section also will reveal the ways in which Yangzhou's dual administrative and mercantile functions embedded the city in national political and economic networks, the latter given physical form by the Grand Canal. It will point toward two important aspects of Yangzhou's history: the city's sometime role as a prosperous trading center linking north and south in times of unification, especially in the Tang and Qing, and its tragic position as a strategic target between north and south in times of division and civil strife.[2]

After briefly addressing the ways in which the city's form and function remained relatively stable from Ming to Qing, despite the catastrophe visited on the city in 1645 during the Qing conquest of Jiangnan, I will turn to a discussion of the Taiping War as an event that was (paradoxically) both transformative and conservative in its effects, at least with regard to the city's physical shape. On the one hand, the Taiping, Qing, and mi-

1 F.W. Mote, "A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow" in Kapp, Robert, ed. *Four Views of China. Rice University Studies,* 59:4, (Fall 1973), p. 35-65.

2 "This has been noted by Antonia Finnane in her article," Yangzhou: A Central Place in the Qing Empire," in Linda Cooke Johnson, ed. *Cities of Jiangnan in Late Imperial China,* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993, 120-1.

litia soldiers that battled for control of the city transformed the urban landscape by destroying or damaging most of the buildings that gave form to it. The war also hastened the decline of the economic and political networks that had defined the city's form and function for more than three centuries, although the seeds of this decline in fact had begun to germinate at least a decade before the fighting began in the region. At the same time, perhaps motivated by nostalgia and a desire to restore the familiar, survivors sought to reconstruct, at least to the extent that they could afford, the physical sites and institutions that had previously defined their city. However, despite their short-term conservatism, the efforts at reconstruction that followed the Taiping War were ultimately futile. Yangzhou's prosperity was too closely linked to its position as a node in transportation networks and salt administration hierarchies that had become too nearly defunct or obsolete by mid-century for the city to recover from the devastation inflicted by the rebels, militias, and imperial armies that crashed through the region repeatedly during the 1850s. Accounts like those in the prefectural and county gazetteers suggest that local efforts at recovery tended to focus on rescuing lost or endangered texts, rebuilding physical landmarks and select institutions, and honoring martyrs. In this case, then, destruction did not clear space for innovation in urban planning, which in any case was not affordable as the city entered a long period of economic decline. Instead it inspired nostalgia for the grandeur ruined by civil war, and fueled (mostly futile) efforts to reclaim as many as possible of the physical and literary remnants of the glorious past--even as the conditions that made that past possible receded ever further from reach.

Part Ⅱ. Morphology in Context: A Historical Perspective on the Shape of Yangzhou

The first walled city in the vicinity of the territory that later became known as Yangzhou was built by Fu Chai, the King of Wu, during the late Spring and Autumn period.[3] This walled garrison, completed in 486 BCE, was called Hancheng, after the Han Canal (Hangou) that this regional ruler built nearby. The King of Wu built his walled city at the highest point in the area, Shu Ridge, which combines a commanding view of the Yangzi flood plain with readily accessible drinking water.[4] The site thus appears to have

3 The name Yangzhou dates back much further, first appearing as the name of one of nine ancient states in the *Shangshu*. However this name was not applied to a city in the current location until 626 CE, during the Tang dynasty. Du Yudi, "Yangzhou lishi dili zonglun," Feng Erkang, ed. *Yangzhou yanjiu--Jiangdu Chen Yiqun xiansheng bailing mingdan jinian lunwen ji.* Taipei: Chen Jie Xiansheng chuban, 1996, 4-5. For an earlier exploration of this problem, see an essay by the Song scholar, Qin Guan (1049-1100), "*Yangzhou ji* xu" (Preface to the Yangzhou Collection). *Huaihai ji*, Gaoyou: Wangshi kanben, 1837, 17: 19b-20b.

4 Zhu Maowei, "Yangzhou lishi renwen zongji," in Feng Erkang, ed. *Yangzhou yanjiu*, 390. Yudi Yuanming, "Yangzhou cheng de lishi bianqian," in Feng Erkang, ed. *Yangzhou yanjiu*, 106.

been chosen on account of its militarily strategic position and defensibility, reflecting the military concerns of a regional ruler in contentious times. Geomancy also may have played a role, as high elevation was considered beneficial in that calculus of placement as well. During the Warring States period, regional powers again competed for control over the north bank of the Yangzi river, and again, a ruler built a garrison on the heights in 319 BCE.[5] The region was administered under various names after the Qin unification, and in the early Han, another regional commander built a walled city roughly four and a half miles in circumference on top of the ridge. When this region revolted in 154 BCE, the walled installation served as a base of military operations until it was brought back under Han control.[6] Until the construction of the Grand Canal during the Sui dynasty, the walled city had primarily military functions, was sited on the heights, and coexisted somewhat ambivalently with a changing administrative structure. Moreover, periods of disuse may have followed destruction in warfare, leading to the further disintegration of walls, and thus total reconstruction in new shapes, in response to new defense and administrative needs, and in accordance with changes in local topography. These changes and lapses may help account for the variation in urban morphology during this early period. Beginning in the Six Dynasties period, additional population, including many migrants from the north, settled on the plain below, outside the protection of the walled city.[7] With the construction of the Grand Canal during the Sui, transportation, rather than defense, became the dominant factor in the siting of the city, and subsequent walled cities in most cases were situated primarily on the plain in close proximity to the canal, although the Tang and Song walls included portions of the ridge as well as the area close to the canal. In many respects, then, Yangzhou's subsequent history and urban form were defined in relation to the Grand Canal, symbolizing the extent to which the city was embedded in the administrative and market networks linking the Yangzi delta to the imperial court. The city's centrality in these political and economic networks meant that in times of unity, Yangzhou prospered, perhaps more strikingly than almost any other city in the empire.

Because the Sui-Tang city was located at the point where the Grand Canal crossed the Yangzi, in close proximity to the coast, and near several key roadways, the city enjoyed a period of florescence as a major domestic and international entrepot during the Tang. Perhaps most famous in Japan today as the port from which the monk Jianzhen set

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5 Du 5. For an earlier account of the history of the Yangzhou city wall, see A-ke-dang-a and Yao Wentian, eds. *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1810, reprint: Taipei: Chengwen, 1974, juan 15.

6 Du 6.

7 Yudi, 110.

sail for the Japanese archipelago and as the city where Ennin and his colleagues began the continental portion of their journey to Chang'an, Tang Yangzhou played an important role as a cultural and economic transit point on the acclaimed "maritime silk road" linking China to the wider world of East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. Due to its increased prosperity and importance, the walled portion of the Tang city was significantly larger than its predecessors, and indeed, larger than its successors, incorporating as it did (in two separate sections) both the ridge and the plain.[8] Administrative and military institutions were concentrated in the portion of the walled city on the heights (yacheng), while merchants, craftsmen, and others, made their homes in the section of the city on the plain (luocheng). The importance of trade in shaping the city physically and economically is suggested by the fact that by the late Tang, the city was built nestled into a bend in the canal, with the canal serving as a moat outside the eastern and southern walls of the city. Gates on these two sides opened directly onto the canal, with obvious benefits for trade and shipping.[9] Neighborhoods and markets extended outside the walls as the city continued to expand and prosper, and as it became one of the empire's most

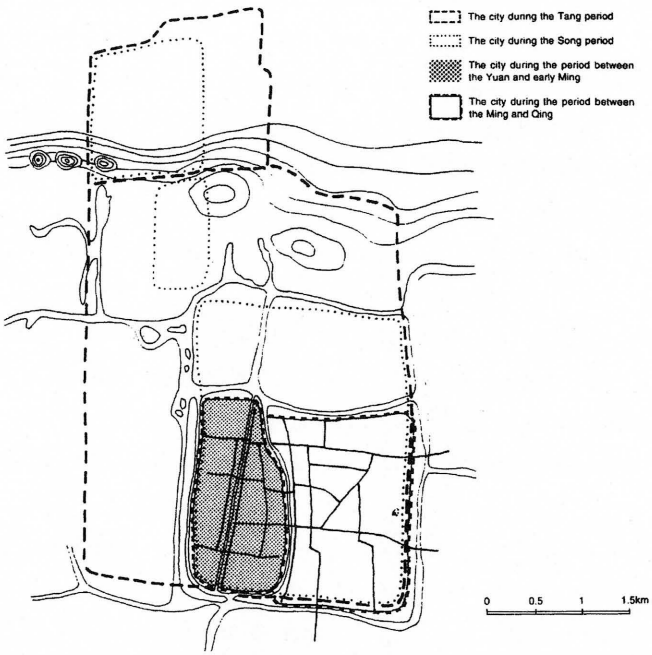

Figure 1: The Changing Morphology of Yangzhou from Tang to Qing, in Xu, 2000, p.68, fig. 3.8.

8 Yudi, 114-5. See also Li Tingxian, *Tangdai Yangzhou shikao*, Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1992, 337-345.

9 For more information on the layout of the Tang city, see Yudi, 115-117.

important commercial centers. (**See Figure 1**)

After suffering severe damage to the city wall and the decimation of the local community during the warfare of the late Tang, and due to changes in the local topography in relation to the Yangzi river, the city was reconstructed on a much smaller scale in the Northern Song. The canal, too, entered a period of decline, leaving the city in a state of obviously reduced significance. The nearby city of Zhenzhou (modern Yizheng) provided an alternative transshipment point in closer proximity to the Yangzi River and expanded even as Yangzhou contracted.[10] It was only with imperially sponsored improvements to the Grand Canal in 1018 that Yangzhou could again function as a Port for the grain transport barges and as an important crossroads between north and south, a position it lost again when north China fell to the Jin in 1126 and contact with the north was severed. As the boundary between Song and Jin was located at the Huai River, Yangzhou became one of the more important Song military outposts north of the Yangzi, and as a result, the walls were renovated and strengthened for defense purposes several times during this period. During the Yuan, the extensive use of ocean shipping to transport official tax grain further marginalized the city of Yangzhou.[11] In both Song and Yuan, the city wall was neither contiguous with the former Tang wall, as the city's relative decline meant that there was no need for as extensive walled area as had been necessary in the Tang, nor was it placed on the site of one of the long-forgotten pre-Tang walls, reflecting again the instability and contingency of the city's physical shape.

The restoration of the Grand Canal in the Ming helped the city recover from near total destruction in the civil war that preceded the dynastic founding. In 1328, there were said to have been only eighteen families left in the city, and for defensive purposes, the city was rebuilt on a significantly reduced footprint, at some remove from the canal in what had been the southwest corner of the Song walled city. During the Ming, Yangzhou began to prosper again, largely due to its position at the administrative center of the lucrative Lianghuai salt monopoly and as a node in trading networks linking north and south. This prosperity attracted additional population, and merchants settled in the area east of the wall and adjacent to the Grand Canal. In the mid-1550s, local officials and merchants joined forces to build a wall around this burgeoning neighborhood in order to protect it from pirate incursions. The city thus acquired a distinctive two-lobed rectangular form, with administrative offices for the prefecture and county seat concentrated in the

10 Du, 18. Changes in the shape of the Yangzi delta left Yangzhou several miles further from the river's north bank than it had previously been.

11 Du, 19.

more orderly Old City, and merchant households and the offices of the salt monopoly located in the New City.[12] These two large districts, separated by a wall and a small canal (formerly the city's moat), were joined by two gates, "Little East Gate" and "Greater East Gate." A late Ming manuscript book, the *Yangzhou fu tushuo* (Maps and Explanations of Yangzhou Prefecture) shows these innovations in urban form, as well as new sub-urban destinations in the vicinity of the prefectural seat.[13] (**See Figure 2**)

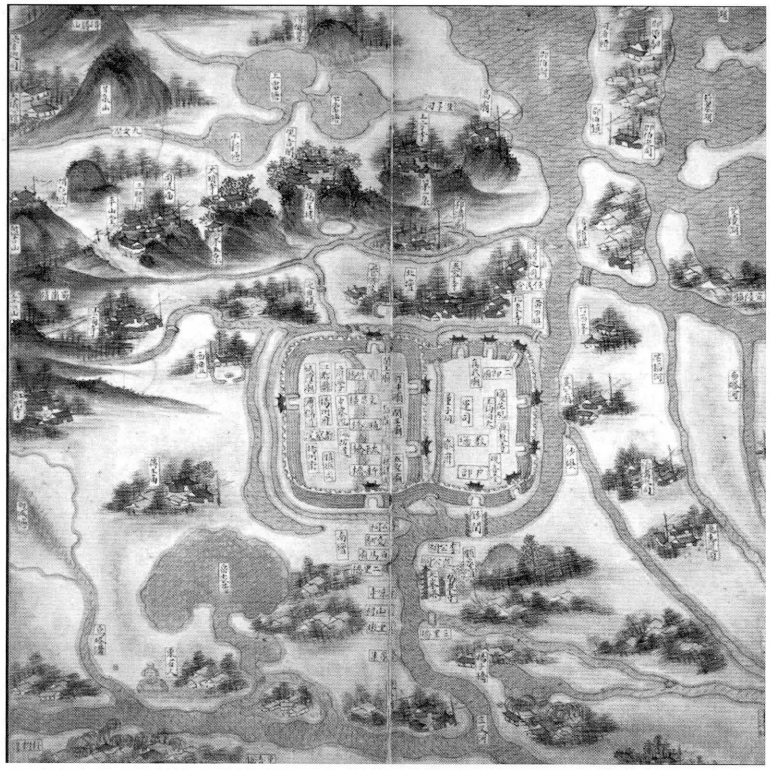

Figure 2: Anonymous, *Yangzhou fu tushuo*, Jiangdu county.

The unusual configuration that came into being in the late Ming lasted nearly four centuries, surviving the Qing conquest in 1645, the damage wrought by the Taiping rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century, and the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911. (**See Figure 3**) The internal wall gradually was allowed to disintegrate in the early twentieth

12 Antonia Finnane, "Yangzhou: A Central Place in the Qing Empire," 131. "Yangzhou fu xinzhu waicheng ji," (Yangzhou prefecture builds a new outer wall). The author's surname is blurred in the Library of Congress copy. In Yin Huiyi, *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1733, 5: 3a-4a.

13 This lovely accordion page book consists of twelve stunningly beautiful hand-colored maps each depicting an administrative unit in Yangzhou prefecture, accompanied by explanatory text, hand-written on gold-flecked paper, describing the administrative history of each county and sub-prefecture. The (unknown) author places particular emphasis on past changes in the administrative hierarchy, as well as recent problems such as flooding and revenue collection.

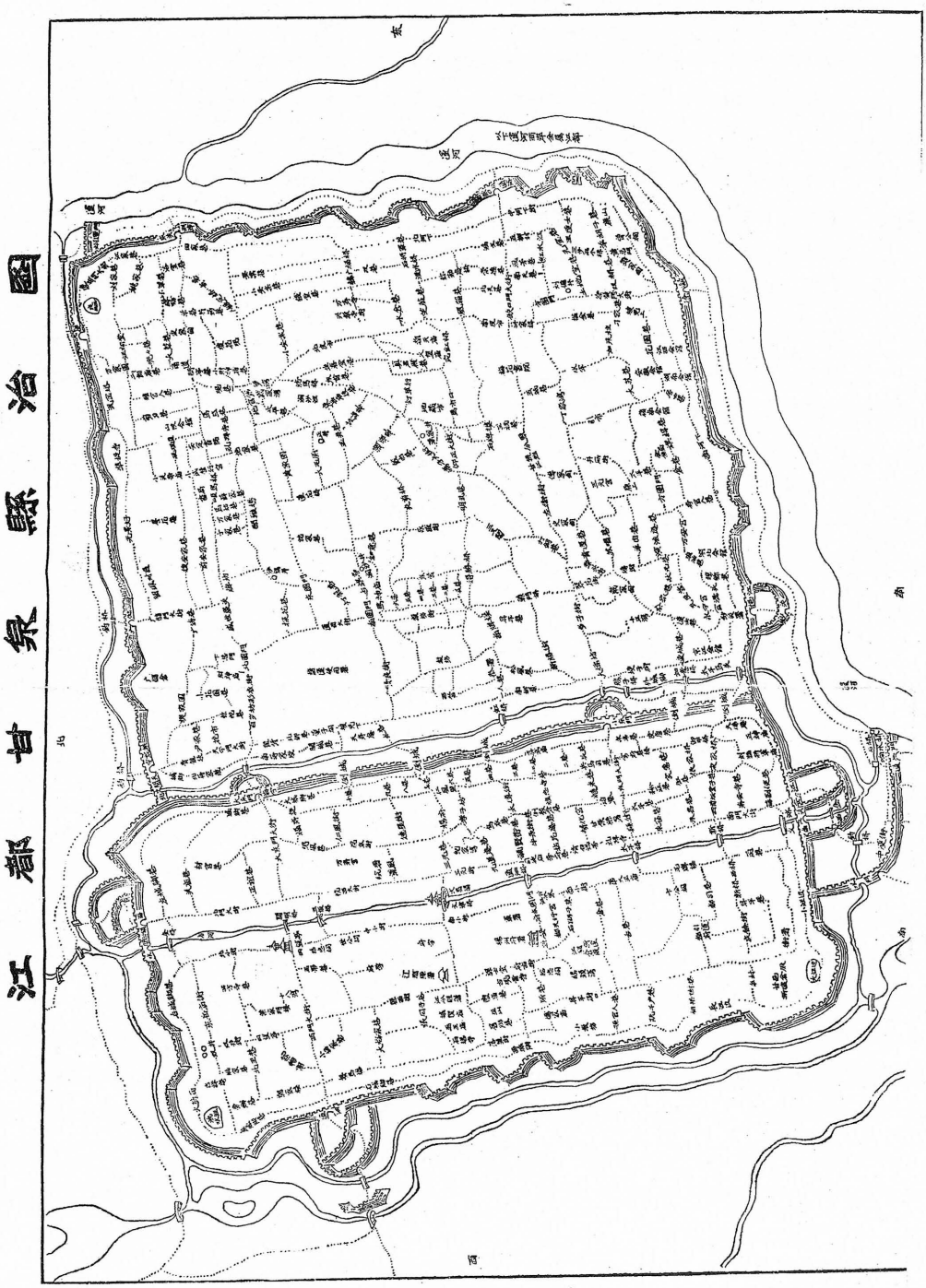

Figure 3: Yangzhou in the early 20th century.

century, at least in part to ease traffic between the two halves of the walled city. The city wall came down in the early 1950s in the name of "modernization" and "industrialization." Its former location is now marked by a combination of canals and roads. The biggest changes to Yangzhou's urban shape other than the removal of the wall have been relatively recent. Beginning in the 1980s, and accelerating especially in the late 1990s, neighborhoods of nineteenth-century homes following the contours of earlier alleyways have given way to parks, plazas, shopping centers, and fast food restaurants in an effort to overcome through new construction the city's twentieth century legacy of "backwardness" and marginality. The durability of the city's urban morphology, despite political change and wholesale destruction, seems linked to the persistence of the walls (which survived, at least in large part, both the Qing conquest of the mid-seventeenth century and the Taiping war of the mid-nineteenth), and also, perhaps, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from the city's conservatism and lack of resources.[14] By contrast, the persistence of urban form from Ming to Qing seems to represent an affirmation that the new regime intended to maintain earlier institutional arrangements and preserve existing symbols of political legitimacy. Thus, while the conquest of 1645 was marked by terrible loss of life, it does not seem to have been accompanied by severe damage to official buildings or the city wall.[15] (**See figure 4**)

As we can see, over the centuries, the shape of the city reflected its changing position in larger economic and political hierarchies, expanding, contracting, and shifting in spatial orientation in response to historical context and circumstances. When tax grain and trade goods were transported between the economic centers of the south and the political center in the north along the Grand Canal, Yangzhou prospered. When communication along the Grand Canal was disrupted, or when north and south were divided, the city reverted to a less glorious position as a component of more localized inland networks. These dramatic shifts of political and economic fortune generally were reflected in the city's size and shape--and in the distribution of population and neighborhoods both within and beyond the city walls. The Taiping War presents a striking example of a case in which warfare inflicted damage and loss on the city's physical infrastructure and human population, without fundamentally altering the city's layout. It also fatally damaged the already weakening physical and institutional infrastructure responsible for the

14 Antonia Finnane, "A Place in the Nation: Yangzhou and the Idle Talk Controversy of 1934, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 53:4 (November 1994): 1156-7

15 For a first-hand account of the massacre at Yangzhou, see Wang Xiuchu, "Yangzhou shiri ji, Hanying duizhao," Trans. Lucien Mao. Lin Yutang, ed. *Xifeng congshu.* Shanghai: Xifengshe, 1930. For discussion of reconstruction of Yangzhou after the conquest, see Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, chapter 1.

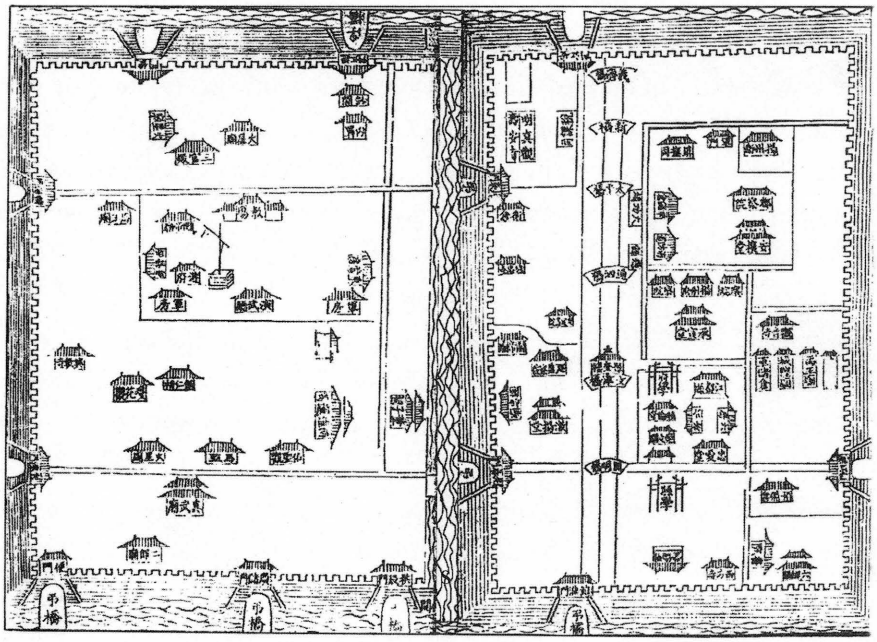

Figure 4: Gazetteer map of Yangzhou prefectural seat, from *Yangzhou fu zhi,* 1733.

city's remarkable rise to unprecedented prosperity in the eighteenth century, in essence sealing the death warrant on the Grand Canal as an artery between north and south and making the court's temporary decision to use maritime shipment (1851) a permanent one. The changes in the salt monopoly structure (1831) meant that local officials lacked the resources to restore the city fully--let alone make innovations in urban design after the war. As a direct consequence of pre-war changes and war-time destruction, Shanghai displaced Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Suzhou, and Hangzhou, by becoming not only the main cultural center of the Yangzi region, but also a nearly hegemonic node in regional and transregional trade. The next section of the paper thus will examine the impact of the Taiping War on the city of Yangzhou, tracing both the extent of the damage and the efforts at recovery in the late nineteenth century.[16] It will conclude by offering a preliminary analysis of an apparent paradox: why (or to what extent) did the city retain its familiar shape despite the extensive damage it suffered in the Taiping Rebellion? Finally, I will also seek to answer the following question: how did changing political institutions in the early twentieth century, arguably themselves at least partially a response to the Taiping disaster, affect the shape of things in Yangzhou?

16 An exploration of the regional and transregional context is unfortunately beyond the scope of this paper.

Part Ⅲ. The Taiping War in Yangzhou

The Taiping War engulfed the city of Yangzhou when the city was captured by the rebels as the Taiping forces completed their Eastern Campaign, having first taken control over cities along the Yangzi from Anqing to Nanjing to Yizheng, Zhenjiang, and finally Yangzhou. According to the chronological account in the 1874 gazetteer, they did not meet much resistance at Yangzhou:

> The Southern Bandit Hong Xiuquan had taken Nanjing, and he began plotting with Yang Xiuqing to dispatch their false deputies Lin Fengxiang, Luo Dawang, Li Kaifang, and Zeng Lichang to lead the bandits eastward. At that time, Zhenjiang had already fallen, and on February 27, Yizheng fell, on March 2, Yangzhou fell. At first Yangzhou resident Jiang Shoumin planned a policy of provisioning the rebels. But the administrative clerk of the salt control station, brevet rank, Zhang Xiangguo soundly criticized this as unacceptable. At the time, the director general of grain transport, Yang Dianbang defended Yangzhou. Zhang Xiangguo led a militia to arrest Jiang Shoumin, who appealed to Yang Dianbang who arranged for his release. When the rebels arrived, Dianbang rushed to retreat and Jiang Shoumin hanged himself. Thus the rebels were able to occupy Yangzhou from whence they sent reinforcements to build earthen installations at Pukou, Guazhou, and Yizheng thus blocking our generals from moving between north and south.[17]

Under threat from the rebels, neither the local officials nor officials in the transport administration comported themselves particularly well. When the rebels took the city between three and five in the afternoon, the transport officials abandoned their posts by boat and headed upstream to points unknown, leaving the local populace to submit to the rebels.[18] As the Transport Commissioner Yang Dianbang reported in his desperate and defensive memorial of March 6, requesting severe punishment for himself along with troop reinforcements to rescue the city:

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17 Yingjie, ed. *Xu Yangzhou fuzhi.* 1874, 24: 1a-b.

18 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 24: 1b. These men were evidently later punished with exile and stripped of their official ranks. According to the gazetteer, this information marks a new discovery--presumably a product of research carried out for the purpose of inclusion in the gazetteer. According to one unabashedly pro-Taiping account, written in the late 1950s, the people of the city "enthusiastically welcomed the rebels" with banners bearing the character "shun" (or we surrender). This is not necessarily the equivalent of an enthusiastic welcome, as it can mean something closer to a white flag of surrender. Zhou Cun, *Taiping jun zai Yangzhou.* Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1957, 17.

> With rebels pouring out of Jiangning, Yangzhou had inadequate military force and reinforcements had yet to arrive.... On the March 1, the rebel forces came across the river and downstream. I was already leading boats on the river at Guazhou, and had rounded up braves to launch the attack. We attacked and sunk countless numbers of rebel boats. Unfortunately the wind changed suddenly and the rebel ships were able to come across with ease. The more they gathered, the more of them there were, and my troops were unable to match them. At this untenable juncture, the rebel force gathered strength and entered. All of our forces (about 200 strong) engaged them in battle and opened fire with cannons killing several dozen rebels. But they were no match for the rebels in numbers. They kept coming from Yizheng on land, advancing both by land and by water, they reached the city of Yangzhou. Our troops were weak in strength, and could not withstand. Yangzhou fell on March 2.[19]

In describing the fall of the city, the gazetteer chronology lists numerous other officials and local elites who died in the assault and were eventually recognized with posthumous honors.[20] Like many other texts from the 1870s, the gazetteer seems more concerned with an accounting of official and gentry behavior, with particular attention paid to meritorious deaths warranting compensation and recognition.[21] By contrast, the gazetteer editors do not provide much concrete description of physical damage in their chronological narrative of the city's fall and eventual recapture nine months later. As F.W. Mote has insightfully observed, cities in late imperial China were often described in terms befitting an agglomeration of verbal, rather than physical, artifacts.[22] In the context of the gazetteer chronology, the transience of physical artifacts like buildings thus appears far less worthy of note than were righteous martyrs presented in the context of troop movements. Still, as we follow the Qing armies and militias through the suburban landscape, we can deduce something of the material damage that must have accompanied the battles.[23]

The gazetteer account tells us that while the city was occupied by the rebels, Qing troops tried repeatedly to retake the city using a variety of strategies. They engaged the

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19 Diyi lishi dang'an guan, eds., *Qing zhengfu zhenya Taiping tianguo dang'an shiliao.* v. 5, Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 1994, 376.

20 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 23: 1b-5a. The gazetteer quotes various compilations of honorable dead.

19 Texts enumerating the meritorious deaths of officials, gentry, and exceptional commoners published in this period include the *Yangcheng xunnan lu, Yangcheng xunnan xulu,* and the *Liangjiang caifang zhongyi lu*, as well as the biographical section of the 1874 gazetteer. The accounts in the gazetteer chronology are in many cases based on the former texts, and on archival materials available to the editors.

22 Mote, 53.

23 Deforestation and the disruption of agriculture must have been prevalent in the area between the walled cities of Yizheng, Yangzhou, and Guazhou, which was not only the scene of many battles, but also the region occupied by the Jiangbei garrison for a nine month period as they laid siege to the cities. On cutting down trees, see for example, Diyi lishi dang'an guan, eds. v. 5, 585.

Taiping forces in battles in the city's suburbs, as in April 1853, when Qing units succeeded in breaking through the rebel defenses northwest of the city, burned a large number of rebel boats on the Grand Canal, and pressed their advantage to launch an attack on the occupied city, only to be defeated by the rebels several days later. We also learn that the rebels occupied important temples in the scenic area northwest of the city wall, including Fahai Temple, and constructed defensive walls from pounded earth in the vicinity of Five Terraces Mountain, another scenic site constructed in honor of the eighteenth-century imperial tours, and that they had built three encampments near the so-called "Twenty-four Bridge," which was also located in the same area.[24] Given that the gazetteer describes intense battles in and around all of these sites, we can infer that damage to this scenic area must have been quite extensive. In addition, the records of loyal martyrs contain references to individuals who died in street battles or fires.[25] Thus despite the general emphasis on human damage in these accounts, we can also infer that there was a certain amount of physical damage within the city walls.

Furthermore, the gazetteer also reports occasional fighting on the walls themselves. For example, in June,

> The regional commander Shuanglai and his forces used cannons and exploding devices to break through the city wall. The administrative clerk of the salt control station, brevet rank, Zhang Xiangguo brought troops from Floating Bridge (Fu qiao), who arranged ladders and climbed up on the wall to kill rebels. When the situation seemed ripe for victory, the rebels torched wooden houses leaning against the wall, and as the flames soared higher, and our imperial troops were forced to climb down from the wall. In addition, due to the lack of reinforcements, they then withdrew the troops and returned to the camp.[26]

According to this account the city walls were damaged by cannon fire and houses in the vicinity of the walls were destroyed in the fighting, although it is difficult to gauge the scope of the destruction. Prior to the attempted assault on the walls by Qing troops, a large complement of Taiping forces led by generals Lin Fengxiang and Li Kaifang set off on a Northern Campaign in April in an attempt to launch an attack on Beijing. Locally, the Qing forces continued to be frustrated in their efforts to retake the city, despite the

24 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 24: 6a-b.

25 See for example *Yangcheng xunnan xulu*, in Chen Henghe, *Yangzhou congke*, 1930-1934. Yangzhou: Guangling guji keyinshe, 1995, 1: 2b.

26 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 24: 8a.

court's repeated and obviously anxious entreaties in edicts and rescripts that they do so.[27] Like the gazetteer, memorials from officials during the period of Taiping occupation in 1853 often included proposals that specific individuals killed in battle receive imperial honors for their sacrifice, again indicating that conferring legitimacy on the dead was an area of particular concern to both the court and its local representatives.[28] With regard to urban form, these memorials provide accounts of battles won and lost, offer excuses for military failure, and also report on the rebels' construction of defenses and acquisition of guns and ammunition. According to one such report, the rebels were using boats in the Grand Canal as a barricade and also had added three layers of wood-and-earth walls around the city wall, fortified with packed mud and defended with cannons. The report adds that the rebels also had booby-trapped the roads, and obstructed or removed all bridges, ferries, and fords.[29] While these temporary constructions themselves did not have a lasting impact on the shape of the city, they would have certainly had an effect on contemporary perceptions of urban morphology and security, and moreover might have contributed to the preservation or destruction of urban space and structures.

Much of the damage within the city walls seems to have occurred after the reconquest of the besieged city. Late in 1853, after more than nine months of rebel occupation and fierce fighting, the rebels abandoned Yangzhou and returned to Guazhou and Nanjing, taking some of the local population with them.[30] Qishan, the special envoy responsible for regional defenses, reported that his forces investigated the situation and arrested more than twenty traitors. He also claimed that only 10% of all urban residences had been destroyed. In his memorial, he minimized the damage caused by local militias, and claimed to be working toward the relief of the suffering people.[31] A few days later, another Qing official sent a memorial to the throne reporting that Qishan's forces had looted the city's pawnshops and seized clothing literally off the people's backs. The official continues, saying that while some might consider this to be the soldiers' rightful reward for punishing the rebels [and perhaps those that harbored them], Qishan's refusal to open the gates to allow private philanthropists into the city to distribute gruel and bread could not be excused. Moreover, after the recapture of the city, the militias had killed many people, and set fires throughout the city, to the extent that "smoke and flames cloud the air and block out the sun and sky."[32] This memorial, like the gazetteer chronol-

27 See for example Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'an guan, eds, v. 11, 52-54, 106.
28 Diyi lishi dang'an guan, v. 5, 586.
29 Diyi lishi dang'an guan, v. 5, 585.
30 On the tactical retreat, see *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 24: 10a-b.
31 Diyi lishi dang'an guan, v. 11, 528.
32 Diyi lishi dang'an guan, v. 11, 544.

ogy, hints at the scope of damage inflicted on the city due to the war, while ominously hinting that much of the damage was inflicted by the Qing troops and their militia allies as they reoccupied the city in late 1853. The city was briefly occupied by the rebels on two additional occasions from February 29, 1856-March 11, 1856, and again from September 1-13 in 1858. In both cases, the rebels lacked the troop strength to hold the city, and opted to continue fighting in the surrounding suburbs. Moreover, fear of a threatened reoccupation by the rebels led to the construction of barricades around the city wall, like those built by the Qing military officer Du-xing-a in 1862. These fortifications later could inspire more permanent changes in urban form, as anxiety about warfare extended past the period of immediate threat by the Taipings, as in the case of the additional blockade wall, complete with several gates and a sluice constructed between the Grand Canal and a point west of the South Gate, added in 1869.[33] While I have not yet fully examined the documents pertaining to the second and third occupations of Yangzhou, the gazetteer accounts of renovations that followed the Taiping war make it clear that damage to the city resulting from the Taiping War was in fact quite widespread.

We learn even more about the scope of the damage from the numerous gazetteer descriptions of sites that needed to be rebuilt or renovated after the rebellion was finally suppressed in 1864. As Jiang Chaobo noted in his essay about the renovation of Pingshan Hall, a famous historical site in the Northwest suburbs that had been destroyed in the rebellion, much of the city lay in ruins, and many official, semi-official, and residential buildings required immediate attention. Indeed, descriptions of infrastructure and reconstruction provide additional evidence of extensive damage, as we can see from the 1874 gazetteer entries on administrative offices, which read as a catalogue of destruction [in the rebellion] and renovation. We learn, for example, that the offices of the Yangzhou prefectural government were destroyed completely in the rebel occupation of 1853, and were rebuilt in the spring of 1873. The offices of the salt censorate were completely ruined around the time of the rebel occupation. The offices of the salt controller fell into disrepair after 1853 and were demolished by the rebels. Rebuilding began in 1869 and took several years to complete. The offices of the Green Standard Army Regional Commander were ruined in the rebel occupation of the city in 1853 and were rebuilt in the Tongzhi period. The Jiangdu county magistrate's office was ruined in 1853 and rebuilt in 1870. The Ganquan county magistrate's office was destroyed in 1853 and restored in 1869.[34]

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33 *Jiangdu xian zhi*,, 2.1: 1B

34 Ganquan and Jiangdu were the two subsidiary counties of Yangzhou prefecture that had their county offices within the walls of the prefectural seat.

Local philanthropic institutions are situated in a similar timeline of destruction and reconstruction. The Establishing Chastity Hall, established in 1840 by a "student by purchase" (jiansheng) named Wu Shihuang, whose family had been in the salt business and who liked to use their wealth and influence in philanthropy. Concerned about the fate of widows without means of support, they purchased a building and set up a dormitory. Later other aspiring philanthropists made contributions, making it possible for the charity to expand and eventually receive financial support from officials. After the Taiping disaster, the buildings and grounds were in ruins. The dormitory complex was rebuilt in 1868. The salt distribution commissioner urged the merchants to make donations. The gentry managed the women's monthly expenses.[35] The city's famous academies, as well as the prefectural school, were flattened in 1853 and either restored or relocated and reopened.[36] Indeed, perhaps to offset the subversive influence of Taiping ideology, several new schools and academies opened in the 1860s. Old schools were told to admit additional students. Oddly, the editors of the 1874 gazetteer highlight the fact that "there are no records of repairs to the Yangzhou prefectural wall, Yizheng county wall, or the Dongtai earth wall, and so we have omitted them."[37] Given that an expensive and very thorough renovation of the walls was carried out by the Transport Commissioner Hong Rukui in 1882, and given the above account of the assault on the walls, we can perhaps infer that the locale lacked the funds to carry out the restoration before that date, although I have not yet found positive evidence to that effect.[38] The gazetteer accounts of post-rebellion restoration seem, nevertheless, to suggest an effort to restore the city's administrative and charitable institutions along pre-war lines, with some expansion in institutions that could help raise local moral standards, at least to the extent that such a restoration or expansion was affordable in the context of the city's reduced fortunes.

Religious and scenic sites apparently also suffered extensive damage in the fighting. For example, the city god temple burned down in 1853 when the Taiping forces capatured the city. A large number of important Buddhist and Daoist temples both in the city and in the suburbs also were ruined in the conflagration. Examples include Fahai Temple, Jingzhong Temple, and Tianning Temple. By contrast, the editors made special mention when sites had not been damaged in the war, as if destruction were the rule, rather than the exception. For example, they note that the Wenchang temple in the south part of the city near the New Bridge was not destroyed by the rebels. Many of the

35 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 3: 7 B

36 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 3: 10b-3:15a.

37 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 3: 1A.

38 *Jiangdu xian zhi*,, 2.1: 1B. Missionary accounts may offer further insight on this point.

city's famous gardens had already begun to decline before the war, as a result of the diminished fortunes of the renowned salt merchant families, but others, like Rong Yuan in the New City, were destroyed in the fighting or converted to other purposes.[39] One famous garden although damaged, reopened after the war as the Hunan Guild Association. New cemeteries created in the aftermath of the rebellion further underscore the human toll of these events, and suggest attention to a different, and quite urgent type of infrastructure, and a morbid change in the local landscape. A total of nineteen charitable cemeteries were created at locations in the outskirts of the walled city to deal with the large numbers of indigent or unidentifiable dead. In addition, the city created a designated cemetery for the people who were martyred in the city in 1853, a refugee cemetery, and a "loyal and righteous" cemetery at Guazhou town to accommodate the many northern soldiers who died in the region.[40]

The end of the Taiping rebellion was further marked by a proliferation of shrines honoring loyal residents, officials, and soldiers, specifically those who died in the Taiping rebellion, though interestingly, newly "recovered" martyrs from the 1645 conquest were also included in some of these collective shrines, and a shrine honoring a Ming loyalist was rebuilt by a leading figure in the suppression of the Taiping. Like the cemeteries, these new structures represent the incorporation of wartime memory into the physical landscape and an attempt to reinscribe centralizing values like loyalty and chastity onto urban space. One collective shrine, established by imperial edict in 1863 honored the prefectural magistrate, Shi Kun, who "gave his life valiantly resisting the rebels" in 1856 along with four other (unnamed) martyred officials.[41] The Illuminating Loyalty Shrine, formerly located near the prefectural yamen in the Old City, had been built in the Jiaqing period to honor officials who died fighting the Miao and White Lotus rebels. It was reinvented in a new location as a site in which to honor more than one hundred and fifty officials and local elites who died fighting the Taiping in the prefectural seat in 1853, 1856, and 1858--plus one man who died in 1647.[42] Another shrine honored Zeng Guofan, the Hunan Army Tuanlian Commissioner and first class brave, Liangjiang Governor General, and Lianghuai Salt Commissioner. This shrine was built under imperial orders shortly after Zeng's death.[43] Significantly, the shrine honoring the loyalist Ming official Shi Kefa, which had been destroyed completely by the rebels, was rebuilt

39 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5:27a. On the decline of gardens in the early nineteenth century, see Jin Anqing, "Guangling mingsheng," (The Famous Sights of Yangzhou), in Ouyang Zhaoxiong and Jin Anqing, *Shuichuang chunyi*, 46-7.

40 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5: 18a-b.

41 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5: 2B

42 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5: 3A.

43 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5: 3A.

by Zeng Guofan, who donated money for this purpose immediately after expelling the rebels from Huai'an, perhaps thereby seeking to highlight the symbolic continuity between his predecessor's loyalty under duress and his own.[44] The city's landscape thus to some extent came to reflect a particular version of wartime memories, one devoted to the commemoration of loyal heroes and martyrs. While these new landmarks sought to position the city within an empire-wide ideological community based on presumed devotion to the Qing cause, the city's place as a national entrepot further eroded during the civil war, and it reemerged in the post-war period as an isolated place, relatively cut off from the political and institutional changes that re-invigorated Jiangnan elites and transformed delta cityscapes at the turn of the twentieth century.

Yangzhou's abrupt post-war decline underscores the city's intense dependence on transportation and administrative networks that were shattered by the rebellion, and indeed, which had begun to deteriorate even during the decades prior to the war. In the early Qing, particularly in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Yangzhou's economic and cultural links to the cities of the delta had made it an honorary Jiangnan outpost on the north bank of the river.[45] Urban architecture during this period also imaginatively linked the city to the cities south of the Yangzi, with many temples and shops said to be built in the Suzhou-style. By the eighteenth century, the city's fortunes had become ever more tightly linked to Beijing, and the city emerged as a glittering and cosmopolitan place whose unique local culture was celebrated in works like the *Yangzhou huafang lu*.[46] This period was also marked by the intrusion of capital-style architecture into the urban landscape and the emergence of a style reputed to combine the best of both north and south. By the end of the nineteenth century, in part due to the damage inflicted by the Taiping War, and in part due to the overhaul of the salt monopoly and the decline of the Grand Canal, Yangzhou was increasingly seen as an isolated, provincial backwater, significant only as the major city of the impoverished Jiangbei region and a source of working-class refugees seeking their fortunes in Shanghai.

Nostalgia for the city's eighteenth-century splendor appeared in writings by locals and visitors more than a decade before the war. For example, Gong Zizhen's 1839 essay describes his return visit to the city, and the longing felt by local elites for the city's glorious past.[47] This sense of loss and nostalgia intensified, however, with the total destruc-

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44 *Yangzhou fu zhi*, 1874, 5:5a.

45 For extensive discussion of Yangzhou as part of Jiangnan, see Meyer-Fong, *Building culture*.

46 Li Dou, *Yangzhou huafang lu*, Yangzhou: Guangling guji keyinshe, 1984.

47 Gong Zizhen, "Xinhai liuyue chongguo Yangzhou ji," in Gu Yiping and Zhu Zhu, eds. *Yangzhou youji sanwen xuan*, Yangzhou: Hanjiang yinshua chang, 1989, 43-4.

tion caused by the extended period of warfare. The late Qing writer Jin Anqing traces this time-line in a first-hand account of the rise and fall of the city's famous sights written in the late nineteenth century. He notes that Yangzhou's gardens were man-made, rather than natural, thereby perhaps intimating that the city's attractions were more vulnerable to decay than the natural beauty of other places. He adds, moreover, that "without the concentrated material wealth and human talents of the sixty year Qianlong reign, none of this would have been easy to achieve." He observes that the gardens had already begun to decline by the end of the Qianlong reign, perhaps as the connection between the city and the capital weakened, adding, "during the Jiaqing reign of twenty five years, they had gradually begun to fall into ruin." He notes that during a visit to Yangzhou in 1819, he saw that several of the famous gardens were still splendid, but he calculates that only fifty or sixty percent of the gardens that he had known before were still standing. When he returned in 1838, after the restructuring of the Lianghuai salt monopoly, he found that many more sights were overgrown with grass.[48] He concludes by noting that "the Taiping rebels wrought havoc here, and destroyed all of the famous sights."[49]

Memories of the more glorious pre-war past dominated the Yangzhou intellectual scene well into the 1880s, as local residents sought to recover the city as "verbal artifact," compiling fragments of lost texts, as well as biographies of deceased artists, dead talents, and ruined buildings, even as stones crumbled, wood disintegrated, and people migrated to Shanghai. In these nostalgic post-War accounts, the Taiping War figures as the crucial turning point, the moment after which the city ceased to be what it had once been. Indeed, the events of more than a decade of warfare are compressed in memory to a single moment, a decisive turning point, whose destructive effects were remembered in the aftermath of the conflict as the proximate cause of the city's downward spiral. Pre-war decline was thus conveniently forgotten or overwritten, as in Jin's account above. The city became an object of nostalgia, a site of memory, an artifact shattered into verbal fragments by the war. The reconstitution of these imagined shards emerges as a powerful motif in post-war compilations, as well as in contemporary diaries, paintings, and manuscripts. Furthermore, despite the extensive damage suffered during the Taiping War, and despite the rupturing of the transportation and administrative networks that had originally given rise to the city's late imperial shape, the overall form of the city as manifested in the configuration of the walls and the layout of streets and alleys paradoxically remained

48 As noted above, the position of Lianghuai salt censor was abolished in 1831, and the monopoly system itself was overhauled. See Arthur Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943, 710-11.

49 Jin Anqing, "Guangling mingsheng," (The Famous Sights of Yangzhou), in Ouyang Zhaoxiong and Jin Anqing, *Shuichuang chunyi*, 46-7.

relatively constant. New buildings were rebuilt on older sites, and older sites were allowed to decompose into ruins and vacant lots. The relative isolation and impoverishment that accompanied the decline of the Grand Canal as a transregional waterway insured that the city retained its "backward" city plan well into the twentieth century, and was not extensively "modernized" like Hangzhou and Suzhou, both cities with which eighteenth-century Yangzhou was frequently compared.[50]

Part Ⅳ. Afterward

Yangzhou's failure to realize a "more modern" city plan in the early twentieth century does not mean that the city was completely untouched by the centripetal political forces that galvanized local elites after the Taiping war, accelerating especially with the introduction of new reform policies in 1901. In Yangzhou, new institutions were created in response to these regional and national trends, but in many cases, they were fitted into existing buildings, and did not dramatically alter the city's appearance, which was increasingly compared unfavorably to other locales and decried as un-modern. In 1908, the city acquired a "modern" police force with its main headquarters located inside the old Anding Academy building. Substations were placed in former temples or unused official structures. New telegraph and postal facilities, as well as election offices were also constructed between 1900 and 1925, as were public libraries, a modern prefectural high school, and other institutions that drew on the city's long tradition of private philanthropy and a growing sense of local/provincial political consciousness.[51] These included charitable hospitals, a unified firefighting committee, an expanded home for the handicapped, a smallpox clinic, and a pediatric clinic.[52]

Nor was the city completely immune to the attraction of industrialization in the early twentieth century, although the local manifestations tended more to renaming and wishful thinking by local elites than to the construction of successful new industries. The 1925 Jiangdu county gazetteer states that:

> In the old days when the salt trade flourished, there was no place that could compare [with Yangzhou prefecture]. Since the Taiping War, while it has deteriorated somewhat, it is still the major metropolis between the Jiang and the Huai... During the

50 On Hangzhou, see Liping Wang, "Tourism and Spatial Change in Hangzhou, 1911-1927," In Joseph Esherick, Ed, *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, 107-120. On Yangzhou's relative backwardness, see Finnane, "A Place in the Nation," 1156.

51 Frederic Wakeman, jr. *The Fall of Imperial China,* New York: Free Press, 1975, 233.

52 *Jiangdu xian zhi,* 1925, juan 2. For an account of similar developments in a more successful urban center, see William T. Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society in a Chinese City, 1796-1889,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984, 119-21, 333.

> Guangxu period, industry gradually began to develop, and those gentlemen who understood the age followed this trend and prospered.[53]

Still, the editors acknowledge, industry was not really flourishing in Yangzhou, as it consisted primarily of textile factories specializing in towels and low quality cloth. They also list an egg factory, where women sort brown and white eggs for shipment to Shanghai, a brick factory out in the suburbs, and, they explain, some of the farmers produce bamboo utensils in the agricultural slack season.[54] While this last item especially amounted to an attempt to describe *any* production as industry, merchant leaders eager to import new organizations and institutions created a Yangzhou Chamber of Commerce in 1907.[55] A peasant association, like those founded elsewhere, was established in the first decade of the twentieth century. By 1916, electric lights had been introduced, and the former Green Standard Army garrison had been converted to a plaza surrounded by teahouses.[56] New religious institutions also introduced a new presence into the urban landscape, as foreign missionary organizations sponsored the construction of churches and church-affiliated institutions in Yangzhou. A large French Catholic church was built within the city walls in the mid-1860s, one British Inland Mission church was founded in 1895, and six American Protestant churches were established in the first decade of the twentieth century.[57]

Despite these modernizing flourishes celebrated by locals, Wang Tongling, a traveler writing in 1925 describes Yangzhou as a decidedly inferior place. Even the "murky gray water" of the Grand Canal north of the Yangzi compared unfavorably to the "azure clarity" of the same canal in Jiangnan. Instead of pretty whitewashed houses, the author finds thatched huts. Instead of southern charm, he finds a backward northern atmosphere. Instead of rice, the people of the Yangzhou area grow beans, barley, and sesame. Dry-field agriculture predominates, compounding the impression of "northernness."[58] The scenic sights of Yangzhou are a complete disappointment to him. After traveling along a miserable road, the traveler and his companions reach two ruined bridges, that are "not even the real thing."[59] Pingshan Hall and the Guanyin temple are occupied by soldiers, and the men are only able to tour with special dispensation from the officers in

53 *Jiangdu xian zhi*, 1925, 6: 1a.
54 *Jiangdu xian zhi*, 1925, 6: 1b-2a.
55 *Jiangdu xian zhi*, 1925, 6: 1a.
56 Yang Zeyou, *Yangzhou youlan zhinan*, Yangzhou zhicheng yinshu guan, 1916, 13.
57 The British church had an affiliated girl's school, while one of the American churches included an attached hospital.
58 Wang Tongling, *Jiangzhe luxing ji*, 1925, 82.
59 Wang Tongling, 83.

charge. Slender West Lake earns praise as the best scenic sight in Yangzhou, but, the author adds, "Compared to the lakes of Suzhou and Hangzhou, it is indeed paltry and insignificant!"[60] As for the area within the city walls, he tells readers that the roads are in disrepair, and so narrow that two rickshaws cannot pass each other, and that automobiles certainly cannot be accommodated. With the ascendance of new political and commercial centers, like Nanjing, Shanghai, and Wuxi, and in the absence of local boosters, Yangzhou "will continue to deteriorate and cannot recover."[61] Other Republican era observers noted that with the creation of new maritime and rail transport networks, Yangzhou had become an isolated inland city, whose industrialization would continue to suffer until transportation improved north of the Yangzi river.[62]

In this context, the preservation of such basic attributes of the city's urban morphology as the city wall and the complex web of winding, narrow alleyways, came to be seen as a mark of misplaced conservatism and evolutionary failure. This state of affairs symbolically, if not actually, ended in the 1950s when the walls came down. Ironically, the post-Mao project of reform and opening up may mark the end of Yangzhou's late imperial layout, as the city's promoters seek to bring it into new networks of power and commerce. Since the 1990s, the city has embarked on a program of street expansion and construction harnessed to the rising political star of native son, Jiang Zemin. In the Yangzhou case, early twenty-first century promises of prosperity seem to be the instrument of more dramatic transformations in the city's shape than the violent rupture of mid-nineteenth century civil war.

【Abstract】

This paper deals with the devastating physical effects of the Taiping war (1850-1864) on the city of Yangzhou and the patterns of urban reconstruction that followed. I argue that efforts at recovery sought to reconstitute the buildings, institutions, and structures that gave shape to the city and that marked the city's place in larger administrative and economic networks. At the same time, I also argue that these efforts at reconstruction were ultimately futile. Yangzhou's prosperity was too closely linked to its position as a node in transportation networks and salt administration hierarchies that had become too

60 Wang Tongling, 85.
61 Wang Tongling, 87.
62 Yang Zeyou, 11

nearly defunct or obsolete by mid-century for the city to recover from the devastation inflicted by the rebels, militias, and imperial armies that crashed through the region repeatedly during the 1850s. This paper thus explores the relationship between urban morphology and political and economic systems, and, more specifically, examines that relationship in the context of a civil war that simultaneously damaged both the physical city and the political and economic systems in which it was embedded.